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FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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THE RETURN OF THE REAPERS-LAUFBERGER.

"Jumbo."

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.

"ERE comes Jumbo!"
Webster Mills, steering the launch
up to the wharf, heard the words
and the laughter that followed from the gaily
dressed crowd who were waiting there. He
knew the launch was big and clumsy and oldfashioned, but it seemed hardly fair to call
it "Jumbo."

Webster said sharply to the young fellow who had raised the laugh with his sally: "It isn't appearances that always count. We may be slow in getting to a place but we get there!"

He was sorry a moment after that he had spoken so sharply, but he did want to defend the launch, if for no other reason than to stand up for his old friend and employer, "Skip" Tracey, who was its owner.

They were often hired to take parties on trips about the lake. On this occasion they were to carry the people who were left over after the two motor-boats of the hotel were full.

"I believe I shall go with you," a clear, sweet voice said.

Webster glanced up to see a girl, fair of face and smiling; and he quickly helped her into the boat. Friends of hers in the motor-boats urged her to go with them, but she refused.

Soon they started, and the motor-boats soon left the old launch behind. As a result, those in the motor-boats flung back jokes about the slowness of the launch, and Webster's face reddened.

"Never mind," the girl at his side said.
"They're saying those things in fun."

Webster nodded. "You're right. If it weren't for the old skipper, I wouldn't mind; but he just loves this old launch, and it hurts him to have people make fun of it. You see, for several summers I've steered the boat

and he has run the gasoline engine, so we're old friends, too; and I like to have him feel cheerful about his boat."

"I know," she answered; "that's why I decided to go with you and the older people. I like his launch, anyway. I'm going back and tell him so."

"Do!" Webster said. "That will please him more than you think!"

When the party returned later in the afternoon from their trip, the sky was slightly overcast and the old skipper looked anxious; but everything went well. They reached the wharf, and again the launch was late in getting in, and again the people in the launch were joked by those who arrived in the motor-boats.

The skipper had little to say until he and Webster had the launch safe in the boathouse, and were eating their supper in the cottage; and then he said sadly: "I guess I'll break the old boat up; she's seen her best days. She's strong yet, but—they make fun of her."

"Don't you do it"—began Webster. He paused as he saw the skipper's face grow tense.

There was a long, low, moaning sound on the air.

The skipper raised his white head. "I thought we'd git a storm. It's a storm—and I haven't heard that kind of wind sence the blizzard of '88."

In half an hour the lake in front of the cottage was gray with dust and white with wave-foam, and the roar of the incoming rollers reverberated for miles along the wooded shore.

The telephone called, and the skipper turned to it. When he faced Webster again, his eyes were grave, but there was a light in them that was thrilling.

"The girl at the hotel—the little girl who went with us and said she liked the launch—she's ill—ptomaine poisoning—something

she ate on the picnic; her father wants to take her across the lake to the hospital at the big hotel. It's a ten-mile drive through the biggest storm in years. We may never make it. Are you game?"

Webster, without replying, jumped for his rubber coat and helmet.

From that time on, everything was done with a quick, short, snappy action.

As they left the cottage, the wind struck Webster with such force that it seemed to smother him. He braced himself and charged on.

The boathouse was creaking and groaning with the wrenching of the wind, and inside it was drenched with water. Webster and the skipper shouted back and forth to each other. The launch was grinding at her moorings. Above all was the howl of the lake wind and the thunder of the rollers against the shores.

Amid the din and racket the old lakeman made the engine ready, and Webster looked over the steering ropes in order to be sure that at no place there was a worn spot. They drew the curtains down around the sides, and lit the big lantern at the bow; the skipper started the engine, and Webster took his position at the wheel. A pull of the ropes opened the boathouse door; a wave rushed in with a roar and grind upon them, broke before the bow and foamed along the sides. The note of the engine sank into a defiant, deep-throated answer to the wind; the launch plowed its way into the dusky, heaving waters; and the night race across the wild lake to save a life had begun.

Webster peered ahead, and his heart thrilled with the thought of what was before him. They were in the bay at the time; when they reached the outer lake—there the real battle would commence.

It was a short run to the hotel landing. Long before they reached it, Webster saw the flaming light on the wharf; and as he drew near he saw huddled groups on the shore.

It took all his skill to bring the swaying launch to rest beside the wharf long enough for straining, pale-faced men to lower into the boat a slight, heavily wrapped figure on a stretcher. As it was placed securely in the hold, a tall man, whose face was yellow under the lantern light but set hard as granite drew the heavy curtains tight, shutting out the last cries of those on the wharf. Only one did Webster hear, a mother's terrified, broken-hearted cry: "Oh, Richard, you cannot get there, you"—

Webster drove his jaws together, peered into the foaming, swirling night, and answered the cry of the girl's mother with a grim inward vow, "We certainly shall!"

The bell over his head rang. He whirled the wheel. They were off.

Straight into the oncoming waves Webster sent the boat, and the water parted and passed, lifting the heavy launch as it did so, and promising in that awful upward heave what the storm on the open lake really was.

On they went, and the waves came stronger and higher. They passed the headland; and there, as if waiting and in hiding long for a victim, the wind and storm rushed at them. The launch seemed to rise bodily and twist like a living thing. But Webster was ready. He whirled the wheel just enough to send the sharp prow of the boat straight into the breast of the rollers, and the engine under the skipper's direction drove the boat through.

From that point the battle was on in earnest. The waves, rolling up white and soaring in the dusk, did not part with a mere threat, but came on; and though they broke at last, they drenched Webster with water and sent small tides foaming down the launch.

Only once did Webster glance back. He saw the tall man crouching beside the stretcher, and knew that his thoughts were not on the storm, but his daughter. Back farther the skipper was bent over his engine, his wrinkled face wearing an almost happy expression.

As the center of the lake was reached, Webster began to realize how little stood between them and destruction on the reefs; if he blundered, and once the boat dropped into the trough, it would be rolled over like a log; if the engine failed, the result would be a wild, whirling drift with the wind and wave, with the roar of the reefs growing louder and louder in helpless ears.

Webster lost his helmet; the cold lake water chilled and numbed him; but he kept his fingers on the wheel. He was tiring rapidly, however, under the unceasing blows of the waves that broke at the prow and smashed by the curtains and upon him. For awful moments he wondered if he was holding the course true; then, finally, he caught through the night in front of him a light like that of a faint star.

Toward that star he set the boat's prow, and on toward it they fought their way. Though blotted out at times, the light loomed larger and larger, and Webster knew that they were approaching the great hotel and sanatorium where the precious burden the launch carried might be saved from suffering and death.

A searchlight suddenly flared, and made a path of brightness over the stormy water. Knowing that some one at the big hotel boathouse had discovered them, Webster sent the launch straight toward the big shadow at the end of the bright path; and a

moment later the launch foamed in through gaping doors into the shelter of the boathouse.

The launch was seized, tied, the curtains raised; and an excited, boisterous crowd who had gathered suddenly became still as they saw the burden the launch carried.

Quickly and silently capable hands worked, and the stretcher disappeared. Webster, dazed and numbed and wet, was hurried into a warm room, where clothing and hot food was given him. As he was trying to drive from before his eyes the picture of the great dark rolling waves that he had faced, he heard the old skipper's strangely happy voice saying to some one, "You see, they had two motor-boats at the hutel, but they didn't dare try 'em in such a storm; so they come to us—an' mind you, they'd made fun of my boat—made fun of it!"

A man's calm voice said quietly, "Perhaps they did make fun of it, skipper; but after what your boat has done to-night, they never will again!"

My Little Dog.

BY FLORENCE HOWARD.

MY little dog and I are such good friends! He greets me joyously when morning comes,

And if it happens that my mood is gay,
The little fellow is so full of play!
He runs and jumps about with all his might,
But likes to keep me always just in sight.
If I am sad, he quickly understands,
And coming to my side, he tries to kiss my
hands.

He meets my every mood, and though he knows

Me at my very worst, he always shows A loyalty no human friend could well surpass.

My little dog. The wise folks tell me That he has no soul; but when I've met The great appeal of his brown eyes, I quite forget

That he is less than human, for, you see, Full many things those brown eyes say to me.

I like the red man's faith of long ago; He thought, when the Great Spirit bade him

To the far Happy Hunting Ground at last, He'd find those canine friends, who in the past

Had wandered with him over hill and plain, And through the forest wilds. Were I to gain

Some day, an entrance to that selfsame land, I think in list'ning attitude I'd stand, And try to look beyond the thinning fog Seeking the welcome of my little dog.

"Jacky, Telephone!"

BY MARCIA CARTER.

JACK and Bob were playing marbles in the front yard, when a voice called from the house, "Jacky, telephone!"

Jack ran to answer the call. He had just learned to use the telephone, and he liked to do it. His cousin Louise, five years old, had often talked to him over the phone (she could reach it by standing on a chair), but she did not know how to call up the number. Louise lived only a mile away and the two telephones were on the same line. This was out in the country.

"Polly wants a cracker!" shrieked the parrot, as Jack went through the house.

"Be quiet, Polly," said Jack.

He took down the receiver and said "Hello!" At first he could not make out the sounds he heard. It sounded like his cousin Louise crying and sobbing as if something terrible had happened.

"Louise!" he shouted. "What's the matter? This is Jack. Are you hurt or

anything?"

"O Jack! Mamma's sick! She's awful sick, and I'm so scared. She wants the doctor, and I can't get him."

"Hang up the receiver quick. I'll telephone the doctor."

Jack knew just how, and it didn't take him two minutes. The doctor knew where the place was, and he said he would come right away.

He thought he would tell his mother about it. He looked all over the house, but could not find her. At last he went out and asked Bob if he knew where she was.

"Isn't she in the house?"

"I can't find her."

"She must be there, because she called to you only a few minutes ago."

Both boys looked and looked. Finally they gave it up.

"Isn't that the queerest thing!" said Bob.

"I'd like to know who called me," won-dered Jack.

Just then the parrot squawked and cried, "Polly wants a cracker!" in a horrid coarse voice. Suddenly changing to a sweet little voice like a lady's she added, "Jacky, telephone!"

How the boys laughed! And they gave Polly two crackers.

The Prairie Compass.

BY WALTER K. PUTNEY.

ONE of the most remarkable plants in existence is the rosin weed, which is known as the prairie compass. Like many other plants with peculiar characteristics, it was discarded for years and scientists laughed when travelers told them that there was a plant on the prairies which showed the points of the compass by its leaves. So much was said about it that Dr. Asa Gray, the celebrated botanist, studied the plant purposely to find out why plainsmen talked of it in this way. He found that the plant did actually point its leaves in a certain direction and this was caused by the singular structure of the leaves.

As you study the leaves of most plants you will find that the upper and under surfaces differ and that you can easily tell one from the other. In the compass plant, however, both sides of the leaves are alike and equally sensitive to the light; therefore in their struggle to gain the sunshine, they assume the position which causes the plant to be known as the prairie compass.

The prairie compass is very large and coarse looking, reaching at times a height of twelve feet. It has a rough hairy surface, and exudes a rosinous juice which gives rise to the name rosin weed. The leaves look something like those on the giant oak and attain a length of fifteen or eighteen inches and breadth of a foot or more. These leaves grow in tufts and are nearly upright with their edges running north and south. The flower is yellow and small in comparison to the size of the plant. And from its structure it looks as if it might be related to the sunflower.

The Adventure of the Fox Family.

BY EULETA WADSWORTH.

N pen number 6 on the Yukon fox-fur farm the seven Blackfox brothers and sisters lived quite happily until one morning when they overheard the farmer and his son talking. Of course these foxes had been born in captivity and knew nothing of the life and freedom of foxes who lived in the woods; and, though they sometimes heard their neighbors in the adjoining pen complaining, they were quite content to eat the meat and fish which the farmer daily brought to them and to play with each other.

Before they grew big enough to look out for themselves, their mother, who had been captured in the woods, used to tell them tales of wild life; but she and Father Blackfox had long ago been moved to another pen, and the children had almost forgotten that foxes ever lived except in a pen with some one to bring them food every day. Often they wondered why the farmer took such excellent care of them. He would

never let any one look over the high solid walls of their pen or open the wooden door even the smallest crack, because, he said, it might frighten them, and that was not good for fox puppies. Which, of course, was true; for there is no animal so timid as a fox.

Well, this morning while they were playing happily, they heard the farmer just outside their door talking about pen number 6, so they stopped to listen. White-tip still had his paw on Sly's shoulder ready for the next tumble when they heard the awful words:

"This litter will soon be old enough, and they are in fine condition. We ought to get from \$1,500 to \$2,000 apiece for their skins. They're the blackest I've ever seen."

"Yes," replied the farmer's son, "rich people don't stop at paying \$2,000 for a muff."

The Blackfox brothers and sisters gasped in terror, and dashed for the darkness of their underground bed.

"Did you hear that?" whispered Coaly, who was the baby.

"Did we?" said Tip and Sly together, who could hardly speak because of the pounding of their hearts.

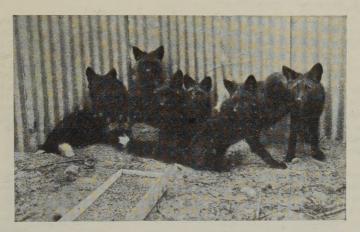
"Oh! oh! oh! what are we going to do?" wailed Coaly.

"We are going to get out of this and save our skins," replied Sly, whose sagacity even in so wise a tribe was remarkable.

But that was much easier said than done. Under Sly's direction they examined every crack in their pen and the door, and they dug all around the outer walls, hoping to find a place where the buried wire netting would not stop their digging to freedom; yet not one hope for escape could they find. They were so panic-stricken they could scarcely eat or sleep for the next few days, and Sly said he had just about reached his wit's end. Once he thought he had solved it, and he planned how he would stand on his hind legs and Tip would climb on up his shoulders and then Coaly would climb over himself and Tip and stand at the top on Tip's shoulders and thus make a ladder for the others to climb to the top of the sheet iron wall which made them prisoners. But on proposing it to the others, they would not hear of such a thing; for it meant that Sly and Tip at least would have to be left behind. Foxes are very loyal. There is no more touching sight than the protection and tender care which a father and mother fox give to their young family. Perhaps it was such an example set by their parents which made the Blackfox brothers and sisters determined to all share the same

For two weeks it looked as if their fate were going to be a sad one—as if what Coaly had sobbed out every night, "Next year at this time we'll all be just muffs," was surely going to come true. And then one morning Sly jumped up with a start, for he heard the farmer and his son moving the red fox puppies in the pen next to them to another part of the farm.

"Now," whispered Sly, excitedly, "here's one more chance. With that pen empty it's possible some one may get careless and leave the door open. In that case we can dig under the partition into that pen and



"White-tip still had his paw on Sly's shoulder when they heard the awful words,"

escape. I'm sure there's no buried wire netting between pens."

Everybody was in a great state of excitement. They could hardly wait for night to come to begin burrowing. All day they whispered their plans and watched the sky, impatient for the daylight to fade.

At last night came, and they began to dig, each taking his turn and working as fast as he could. All the time their poor hearts beat hard with fear; not only the fear of being discovered, but that after all their hopes the door to the empty pen would be locked as tight as their own. No one came near to disturb them, however; and the night was only about half gone when Sly clawed away the last crust of dirt and stuck his head cautiously up in the other

Without advancing another inch he anxiously scented the air until he was sure that no enemy, either man or animal, was near. Then he crept toward the door of the pen to see if it was locked. He was almost afraid to try it when he got there. Suppose he couldn't open it? The very thought almost stopped his breath.

But the next moment he ran his sharp nose against it and gave it a push. To his great joy it opened a little, and he scooted back through the newly dug passage to tell the others. Almost in a flash the whole Blackfox family was following Sly's lead swiftly across the sandy country headed straight for the big woods. They took great care to avoid all open spaces, traveling always near the cover of the low brush. And, to make it still more difficult for the farmer to pursue them, they sometimes traveled in circles or doubled directly in their tracks. When daylight came they went into hiding, and did not resume their journey until night came again.

"Now," said Sly, when daylight came the third morning, "I think we have put enough miles between ourselves and the farm to be safe. We'd better get to work and make our home. The snow may come any day."

"Oh! I'm so hungry, I'm just about starved," wailed Coaly. "We haven't had anything to eat for two days."

"So is every one hungry," replied Whitetip, "but it's better to be hungry than to be a muff." At that everybody laughed, even Coaly joined in; and always after that whenever any one complained about anything somebody would cry, "Muff! muff!" and that would start a laugh, and everything unpleasant would be forgotten.

> They went to work with a will to make their winter home. First they chose a nice dry place; then they began to burrow industriously. Sly said their house must have several doors, for their mother had said all foxes built their homes that way, so if an enemy came in at one door they could run out at another. The summer heathberries and wild fruits were gone, but they caught mice and lemmings, which are queer shorttailed mice without any ears; and once Bushy brought home a tough old hare, and they had a real feast. The house was finished and cosy; but a long snowstorm came on, which made game very scarce, and a hunter shot Tip in the foot, and the Blackfox family began to get downhearted. Then suddenly

Coaly remembered their cheerful game and cried "Muff! muff!" and immediately every one agreed that they were a lucky lot, and they were soon again in a happy mood.

Playing the Game.

BY VLYN JOHNSON.

WHEN Sister Nell and I are tired, We have a very easy game.
We call it playing "'Round the Room," And it's exactly like its name.

Whoever starts it has to say The number and the color, too. Of something that we both can see-It's really lots of fun to do.

Just like to-day, when I began: 'There's one, and it is blue and white." But Nellie had the hardest time, Although 'twas in the plainest sight.

I laughed because she looked so cross. 'It is the ribbon on my hair.' "You can't see that," she answered back, "And so of course it isn't fair."

But that is where the joke comes in! And Nellie goes way down the class: I saw that ribbon on my hair Right over in the looking-glass!



THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

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Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

TYNGSBORO, MASS.

My Dear Miss Buck,-I go to the Unitarian church and Sunday school. I like the stories in The Beacon and I would like to join the Beacon Club.

I am eight years old and am in the third grade in the public school.

Yours truly, FLOYD U. BANCROFT.

BELMONT, MASS., 27 Clover Street.

Dear Miss Buck,-I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club. I go to the Unitarian church in Belmont. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and do the puzzles on the other side of the paper. I am eight years old.

Sincerely yours, JANE M. SHERMAN. WEST MEDFORD, MASS. 131 Woburn Street.

Dear Miss Buck,-I have just started reading The Beacon and like it very much. I go to the Medford Unitarian church and have just been christened, with my three little brothers. I wish to be a member of the Club and wear the button.

Your little friend, EDITH BINGHAM WHITTEMORE.

Edith's brother Louis, six years old, also writes a letter, telling us of his wish to join our Club.

Other new members are Alice Bacon Townsend, Nashua, N.H.; Edith Price, Marblehead, Mass.; Hester Howe, Marlboro, Mass.

Grip Your Beginnings.

BY F. C. H.

N the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, a few years ago, it was said that Oxford had two prime merits. "They were long in reach and long through the water, and they achieved their length and their victory because they were swift in gripping their beginnings.

In life it always pays to grip one's beginnings. That is a big part of the secret of those who do things. Biography after biography shows that, and for youth biography is the finest of all reading. It is good to know how others got their grip swiftly on the oarsno looseness, no indolence.

That was Stonewall Jackson's secret the man who was to the South what Lincoln was to the North in the great struggle. He also was a great and a brave man who counted in life.

Watch his youth and you understand. He was keen. He meant to get a place in the Military Academy and he got it in spite of obstacles. Then he determined to get a place in the Field Artillery and presently he was given a small command in his section.

In the field his only fear was lest he should not meet danger enough to make his conduct conspicuous. With one gun and in an isolated position, his comrades either dead or fallen back, -- and there is no more disheartening situation than that,—he continued to load and to fire. That was at Chapultepec. A small command he had, that was all, but he gripped, not losing a moment, and within eighteen months of joining his regiment he was breveted Major. That spirit brought him triumphant to his goal.

Some time ago a Presbyterian minister in Scotland pointed out to me a portrait on his study wall. "That man," he said, "might have done anything." He was once a ploughman, and at forty he was offered the principalship of the University of Edinburgh, but declined. He had given himself to the work of the ministry, he said, and refused to quit even for that dignified office. And, even more remarkable, not even his own brother knew until after his death that the post was ever offered to him. No boasting there,-just a beautiful reticence and hu-

That man was John Cairns. I have just read his life. Here he is gripping his beginnings. He is twelve years old. The family was large and poor, and there was only one living-room. He had just commenced Greek, and with all the family present evening study was impossible. "John stipulated with his mother that she should call him in the morning, when she rose, an hour before anybody else, to prepare breakfast. And so it happened that if any of the rest of the family awoke before it was time to get up, they would see John studying his lesson and hear him conjugating his Greek verbs by the light of the one little oil lamp the house afforded."

That's the way. To that spirit a future is assured. He who thus grips life need have no fear. He will make good, doing his utmost where he is, every day.

The present, like Jackson's one gun, may be made a big opportunity. Slacking round, dawdling, not doing one's best, is the thing to fear. To play the game in the present, not slacking any duty, however irksome, taking ourselves in hand, keeping base things under, "fighting the good fight" with such weapons as are at hand,—that is the way of life. On that path there is promise and hope. On any other there is not. There is an army of "slaves who should be kings," only they never gripped their beginnings and were left behind. Resolve not to be in that crowd. The world makes way for the keen and the resolute, especially for men of character and of faith, for that counts most of all.

Betty Botter's Butter.

BETTY BOTTER bought some butter. "But," she said, "this butter's bitter; If I put it in my batter, It will make my batter bitter; But a bit of better butter Will but make my batter better." So she bought a bit o' butter Better than the bitter butter, And made her bitter batter better. So 'twas better Betty Botter Bought a bit of better butter.

Selected.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XII.

I am composed of 20 letters. My 14, 15, 16, 17, is something smooth or level. My 18, 19, 20, is a boy.

My 5, 10, 3, is a bone in your body.

My 8, 9, 6, is not in.

My 11, 10, 6, is to rest in a chair.

My 1, 2, 3, is to steal.

My 3, 9, 5, 1, is what a chestnut comes out of.

My 3, 4, 12, 13, is the nicest of something. My 7, 2, 15, 14, is to like somebody very much.

My whole was a well-known author.

ELIZABETH HAWES.

ENIGMA XIII.

I am composed of 12 letters. My 1, 11, 10, 2, is a kind of tree. My 7, 11, 8, 2, is to exist. My 1, 2, 12, is a vegetable. My 1, 2, 4, 3, 6, is a piece of money.

My 5, 7, 11, 1, is to fall down. My 2, 9, 5, 6, is not difficult.

My whole is a State in the United States.

JANE M. SHERMAN.

COMIC GEOGRAPHY.

- 1. What country is always lamenting?
- 2. What is a good country to be angry in?
- 3. What country is never warm?
- What country always wants food?
- To which city should one go to buy paper at wholesale?
 - 6. What city is in a state of conflagration?
 - What is the best country for a hair cut?
 - 8. What is a good country for fishing rods?
- 9. What is a good country for frying?
- 10. In which country are you likely to be gobbled

ADDITIONS AND BEHEADINGS.

1. Take the last of anything, prefix one letter; and make a word that means to lean over.

2. Take something that tells time, cut off its first letter, and get something that fastens a door.

3. Take a food, cut off one letter, and get what you do to it.

4. Take a beautiful thing you see at night, cut off a letter, and get a sailor.

The Mayflower.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 4.

ENIGMA VIII.—Grace Darling. ENIGMA IX.—Utah, Idaho, Ohio.

CONCEALED CITIES.—1. Damascus. 2. Naples. 3. Buffalo. 4. Cairo. 5. Mobile. 6. Paris. 7. Denver. 8. Trenton.

Beheadings.—1. Steam, team, meat. 2. Chill,

hill, ill. 3. About, bout, out. WORD SQUARE.— A P R O N

PROVE ROSES

OVERT NESTS

THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR

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